Anarchipelago Kollective

Issue 0

Anarchipelago Kollective

2017

Contents

Towards an Autonomist Leftist Movement in the Philippines 4

Autonomy through Abolition of State Terror and its Matrices of Oppression 6

[poem] 8

Anarchipelago Kollective is a group of multi-tendency leftists working in struggle against authoritarianism.

Our story is that of unbelonging — though our origins are from the island nation-state known today as the Philippines, we are also moving through diaspora and displacement, through the white supremacist matrix of the United States, the rigid binaries of gender and sexuality, the space in between here and there. We have also come together out of shared frustration and disillusionment towards the hegemonic groups of the Philippine left.

We reject both liberalism and conservative nationalism as ideologies invested in the preservation of the state. The existence of both the state and capitalism rely on the worldwide exploitation, subordination, and policing of darker, struggling communities — communities that we are from, and that we are a part of. Therefore, we are both anti-state and anti- capitalist.

Our struggle is the global struggle for dignity and life of all oppressed peoples. Because many of us do exist at the intersections of these identities — brown, queer, femme, chronically ill/disabled — we engage in horizontal, collective decision-making and transparent communication around needs and capacity, rather than reliance upon strict hierarchy and leadership.

Towards an Autonomist Leftist Movement in the Philippines

Before his presidency, Duterte as Mayor of Davao was linked to the Davao Death Squad vigilante group which executed more than 1,000 people over a decade. Despite this, *the major parties of the Philippine left heralded Duterte as a pro-people, anti-imperialist, unorthodox candidate for the presidency.*[1]

Over 13,000 people — including women and children — have already been killed since the beginning of Duterte's drug war, mostly in the poorest urban areas of the Philippines. There is no indication that the killings will slow or cease under this regime.

While in office, Duterte has *unapologetically and repeatedly threatened to declare Martial Law*[2] (which has already become a reality in Marawi, motivated by Islamophobia), *candidly compared himself to Hitler in his promise to slaughter millions*[3] of drug addicts, *and joked about how he should have been the first to violate a victim of gang rape.*[4] Duterte arranged for the reburial of Ferdinand Marcos in the Libingan Ng Mga Bayani (Heroes Cemetery), while his presidential campaign was *funded and strongly supported by*[5] the Marcos heirs Imee Marcos and Bongbong Marcos. Duterte also *engaged in character assassination against those who have attempted to hold him accountable,* including the now-imprisoned Senator Leila De Lima,[6] who led the charge in investigating Duterte's record of human rights violations.Yet the major leftist blocs have been reluctant to declare their opposition to the Duterte administration. Instead, they have become *entangled in an endless tug-of-war that they refer to as "peace talks".*[7] One day, the claim is made that Duterte is a socialist willing to work for the good of the people:[8] "Duterte's show of readiness to continue cooperation and friendship with the national democratic movement is the basis of possibilities for a fruitful alliance with his government." The next day, *Duterte himself is calling for leftists to be captured and killed.*[9]

The inflexibility of these top-down organizations has discouraged members within their ranks from speaking outright against Duterte. At the same time, their hostility towards autonomous leftist movements in the Philippines has manifested in *the silencing of those with more vocal cri-*

[1] Welcome President Duterte, Arrest Aquino! Embrace the People's Agenda for Real Change! bayanusa.org
[2] Rodrigo Duterte's Most Contentious Quotations www.nytimes.com
[3] Duterte donor Imee Marcos not in his SOCE www.rappler.com
[4] A Philippine senator defies her president — from behind bars www.latimes.com
[5] On the Communist Party of the Philippines' support for fascistic President Duterte www.wsws.org
[6] Alliance and struggle under the Duterte regime www.philippinerevolution.info
[7] Duterte to CPP: No more talk, let us fight www.gmanetwork.com
[8] A Filipino 'subversive' in America runs into 'leftist' censors usa.inquirer.net
[9] www.facebook.com

tique of the Duterte administration[10] and *the posturing that the party members are the only 'true' revolutionaries*[11] organizing the masses.

Ultimately, the ambivalence of the leftist vanguard parties towards Duterte — and the reluctance to retract their leadership from Duterte's cabinet — has neutralized the possibility of building a broader resistance against his administration.

To be clear: we reject Duterte's authoritarian rule because we do not believe in negotiating with fascists.

You cannot claim to be "pro-people" while motivating and perpetuating violence with a politic of ruthless machismo. *You cannot hide behind the rhetoric of anti-imperialism while entertaining and colluding with western forces*[12] to maintain their investments in Philippine land, resources, and labor.

Duterte's apologists call for us to consider that he is a "flawed" human being, that *he is "not to blame" for the rising casualties in the drug war.*[13] But we understand what flaws look like. Wielding state violence — consistently and unapologetically — is not a flaw. Death squads and blood spilled nightly on the streets are not flaws. A strongman's iron fist is not a flaw: it is a weapon.

And so we do not mistake strong men for saviors. A nationalist, socialist "revolution" that systematically commits genocide against the poor, that is fueled by patriarchy and misogyny, that is homophobic, that is ruthlessly militaristic, that insults Western powers to our face but continues to make deals with them behind our back, is no revolution at all.

[10] Philippines' Duterte on Trump's White House invitation: 'I'm tied up' thehill.com

[11] Duterte not to blame for rising drug slays: Bayan news.abs-cbn.com

[12] _

[13] _

Autonomy through Abolition of State Terror and its Matrices of Oppression

Las Filipinas — the imperialist project that began in 1521 with Spanish colonization still exists to this day: a de facto colorist caste system, the rule of billionaire haciendero oligarchs. More than five hundred years of plunder and conquest. Generational trauma. Grueling poverty. Violence. Violent repression. The legacy of empire. The Philippines is a neo-colony of the United States and continues to be exploited for military purposes, natural resources, and a market for U.S. transnational corporations.

The drug war in the Philippines is situated within this context.

For the United States, the Philippines has never been more than a strategic pawn in a global chess game. Duterte calls former President Obama the "son of a whore", invoking the ongoing police terror in the United States to deflect criticism from himself. But the applause for his anti-imperialist statements cannot drown out his hypocrisy. As if a hierarchy of colorism and anti-Blackness do not exist in the Philippines. As if the vigilantism that he openly encourages is not its own form of terror against the Filipino people.

What is currently taking place in the Philippines cannot be decontextualized from hundreds of years of Spanish and U.S. imperialism. The fate of the Philippines is also interdependent on the liberation of all colonized peoples, especially Black and indigenous peoples in the U.S. and other western states. Imperialism is an extension of western empire, an appendage reaching outwards from the belly of the beast.

As autonomist leftists, we are working to deconstruct the matrices of violence that crush all people living in the margins. We draw parallels between the imprisonment and modern enslavement of Black and Brown peoples in the U.S. with the present reign of terror in the Philippines that has claimed more than thirteen thousand lives in the past year alone. Both states have used the veil of a "war on drugs" to legitimize the imprisonment and assassination of marginalized peoples. We are abolitionists in our rejection of the carceral state and its militarized prison industrial complex — both in the U.S. and the Philippines. There is no justice to be found in cages or in summary execution.

We honor the legacy of and the ongoing struggles for self-determination led by Black and indigenous peoples, the internationalist work of the Third World Liberation Front, and the almost 600 year-long fight of the Philippine archipelago against each wave of colonizers. We seek to identify and solidify the connections between each of these resistance movements.

We strive to dismantle capitalism, classism, white supremacy, anti-blackness, patriarchy, heterosexism, imperialism, ableism, and other violent hierarchies of oppression — not by climbing to the top, but by bringing the top down.

We understand the vast and encompassing nature of our struggle, but we do not accept that things are 'just the way they are'. We do not have all of the answers, but we refuse to be sold the lie that our saviors are those who emerge victorious in a game of survival of the fittest.

We fight for the possibility of our own and each other's existence as dark, femme, queer, sick/disabled, and poor: through collective care, mutual material aid, resource-building, skill-sharing, and self-defense.

We seek a world not limited to what we can see before us — a world beyond colonial occupation, imperialist exploitation, enforced binaries, and the violence of white supremacist ideology.

We do not pretend to claim ownership for the revolution. We are not the leaders of the people, we are the people.

So, we ask you: How might we envision a world where we are all allowed to live, where the most powerful do not dictate the fate of those they trample on their way to the top? How are we already moving towards and building that world?

[poem]

what Being Here means to me is listening
and showing up for those most marginalized
in our communities.

Being Here is a reminder of slowing down
and listening to my body, my needs.

taking care of my spirit, while being
pushed and pulled in many directions.

sometimes i wonder what my body wants if i
didn't have to go to work. where would she
go? or would she stay in bed all day.
fighting anxiety and depression is a fight
fought by many.

navigating having a lot more than others,
but still being low income, and wishing i
can be diasporic island brown girl jesus
with the ability to house and feed
everyone.

side note: navigating dating and desiring
love is weird.

Being Here is complicated. Being
Present is tough.

shoutout to my mom, for being
tricked into the american dream.
shoutout to my siblings surviving
assimilation, and even being
assimilated. shoutout to all of
the migration stories and stories
in the diaspora. shoutout to
everyone in motherland for
resisting and surviving. shoutout
to all my grandparents who are in
heaven together.

The Anarchist Library
Anti-Copyright

Anarchipelago Kollective
Anarchipelago Kollective
Issue 0
2017

theanarchistlibrary.org